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My Lady Muse

and

OTHER POEMS

by

JOHN D. NUSSBAUM

of the

New York Bar

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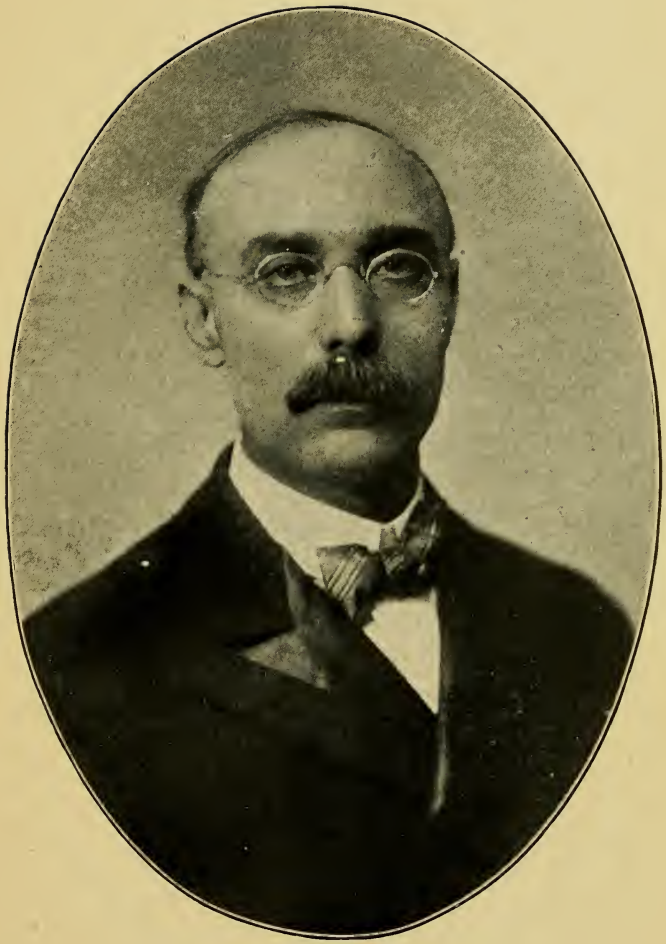

DEAR READER

IT is with fear and trembling that I enter the gates of publicity. I fear the storm of criticism that will break over my head for having dared to court the muses in a language not my own, except by adoption, at a late period of life. For has not Macaulay said in his sketch of Frederick The Great: "No noble work of imagination, as far as we recollect, was ever composed by any man except in a dialect which he had learned without remembering how or when, and which he had spoken with perfect ease before he had analyzed its structure." If this be true, I am apprehensive that it may prove my undoing as a poet in the language of Shakespere. But if, peradventure, my verses should happen to please, I shall be happy indeed!

THE AUTHOR.

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Shulamith

(In memory of my beloved little girl Shulamith, who departed her life in October, 1904, age three years and a half.)

Peace", thy name, O Shulamith, did spell;
Child of perfect beauty, too, it meant:
What, remembrance now is left to tell,
Remind of thee, my pure, my innocent,
Sweet, little-darling Shulamith?

* *
*

Peace! And may the peace by name we know
Find the way into the wounded breast!
Lo! In heaven a new star's aglow!
'Tis my little bird that flew to nest
'Mong stars of peace—my Shulamith!

(Shulamith in Biblical Hebrew means Peace, also Perfection)

MY LADY MUSE

Heaps of abuse
Have fallen on me,
My Lady Muse
For the love of thee!

Even my spouse,
Sweet Emily,
Has fled my house
Because of thee!

I'm left alone,
To sing my ditty;
The friends, I've known
Eye me with pity!

"I must be crazy",
All of them say,
"Or else, a lazy,
Good-for-nothing Jay"!

All this I stand
And much more abuse;
Uphold my hand!
Sweet Lady Muse!

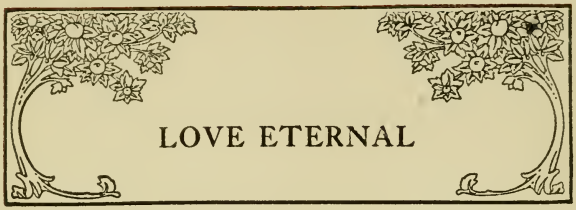
MY LOVE'S A GOLDEN DREAM

In Fancy-land my Love
As queen doth reign supreme:
The image of all fancies, She,
My Love's a golden dream!

Would that my dream could last
More than a while! But no;
A rude awak'ning all-too-soon
Extinguishes bright vision's glow!

REFRAIN:

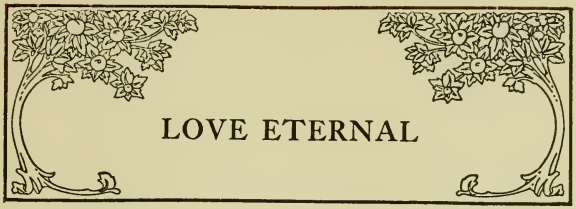
O Love, my golden dream,
Thou art sun's fairest beam!
Without thee, Love, we seem
A shadow—but a dream!



LOVE ETERNAL

I

When the autumn-leaves are falling——
Leaves of yellow, golden hue——
And deserted fields of plenty
Yield but drops of morning-dew;
When the gentle summer-breezes
Are but wafts of yesterday,
And the north-west winds, the chilly,
Usher in long winter's stay;
When the earth with frost is bitten,
And the world is wrapped in snow——
Somewhere warm the sun is shining,
In my heart, where Love I know!



II

When the autumn-leaves are falling
Off the fruitful tree-of-life;
And, stripped of his strength, his power,
Helpless man gives up the strife;
When the dreams of youth no longer
Follow in the wake of morn,
And at eventide the darkness
Thicker grows, hope seems forlorn;
When with palsy limbs are shaking,
And the voice has lost its ring——
When the end comes, Love still whispers:
"Fear not death, new life I bring!'

MY "EAST-SIDE" BELLE

I often meet
A maiden sweet,
When to and fro
The "East" I go.

Her name is not
Pauline, Charlotte,
But Rachel (Lamb), *
Whose garment's hem,
To touch, I deem
A blissful dream!

You see, perchance
A bashful glance——
A simple air——
A beautiful pair
Of lovely eyes,
In whose depth lies
A charmer's spell——
My "East-Side" Belle!

*The meaning of Rachel, in Hebrew, is Lamb

I'M ASLEEP, BUT MY HEART'S AWAKE.

When my weary eyes are seeking
Sleep's refreshing couch at night,
Then their closing lids in slumber
Find disclosed new realms of light!

As I to the brink am borne,
Brink of life's forgetfulness!
And, bereft of all my senses,
Left I am in helplessness;

As I sink into oblivion——
Up creep shadows from the deep;
Phantoms rise into existence,
Worlds—but I am fast asleep!

Fast asleep, yea, but a wakeful
Heart beats in my troubled breast;
Though unconscious, yet the bosom
Never knows a moment's rest!

At all stages, waking, sleeping,
Life in one long dream is bound;
It's interpretation no man
Knows——A mystery profound!

NASHOTAH

I

A wee, little country-lass I know
And cherish with Love's ardent glow!
In vain I seek near her to be,
She hides in blushing modesty!
Far away, in the golden West,
Where Indian-summers smile their best,
And gleam with light the silvery lakes——
There merrily sings, while my heart aches,
In happy ignorance of me,
Nashotah! Her sweet melody!

NASHOTAH

II

Alas! Too far from thy retreat,
Dear heart, have strayed my restless feet;
Yet from afar my eyes behold
Thee often, as in dreams of old,
Arrayed in dazzling, snow-white fleece,
And wrapped in air of sylvan peace!
Far away in the golden West,
Where builds the bird its coziest nest,
Nestles prettily, in her bower of green,
Nashotah! My most beautiful queen!

NASHOTAH

III

A score of fleeting years has spread
Its swiftest wings and past me fled
To spheres of everlasting light;
Whilst I, in my attempted flight
To lofty heights, am left behind,
With poverty and fate unkind,
Unceasingly, to wrestle and contend——
What makes me fight unto the end
And look for final victory?
Nashotah! Thy dear memory!

TO-DAY

Let poets praise the good old days,
The ages past, the ancient lore !
Let dreamers dream of far-off gleam,
Of lights that shone in days of yore;
As for me, all I can see——
Is, "To-day"—Nothing but To-day!

Let seers see all that shall be
In the far future, good and well !
Let sages wise the fall and rise
Of coming storms and tides foretell;
As for me all I would see ——
Is, "To-day"—Nothing but To-day!

Let others trust in chance and gust,
On "To-morrow" stake their hopes !
The foolish may employ their day
Vainly mending broken ropes;
As for me, all I shall see ——
Is, "To-day," nothing but To-day!"

LITTLE CHILDREN

I

"Little children!" darlings sweet,
Let me worship at your feet!
For in you Love's holy fruit
I behold, revere, salute!

"Little children!" darlings sweet,
Your favor, I, your love entreat!
For though you be but children small,
To me, you are—the world and all!

"Little children!" where'er your home,
In lowly or in lofty dome;
Of whatever race or call,
I adore you, one and all!

LITTLE CHILDREN

II

"Little children!" Worlds of joy!
'Round a little baby-boy,
'Round a tiny mite-of-a-girl
In one rapturous motion whirl!

"Little children," O the joy!
To behold a little boy;
Or a doll-of-a-girl neat ——
Is there anything more sweet?

Little children everywhere:
Some are dark, and some are fair;
Some are cute and some are queer,
Everyone, a "Little-dear"!

LITTLE DEARS

I

I love you for your eyes of blue;
Little dears, do love me too!
For your brown or black orbs-bright,
Twinkling like the stars of night!

II

For your sweet-faced innocence,
Beaming with intelligence;
For your spirits, light and gay,
Brimful with the mirth of play!

III

For your pretty, childish ways,
Whims and fancies, games and plays;
For your laughter, loud and clear,
Ringing with delight, good cheer!

LITTLE DEARS

IV

For your showers of sudden tears,
Fraught with foolish frets and fears;
For your quick forgetfulness
Of all ills——what blessedness!

* *
*

Little children," one is calling,
"Unto me come," leaves are falling;
And my tears in torrents shower
Upon an early, faded flower!

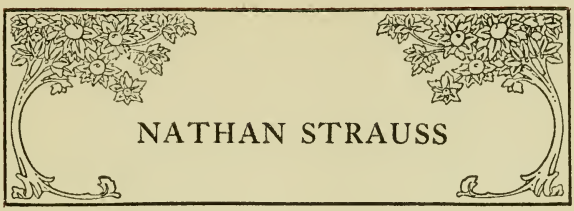
OUR LITTLE ONES

As I look into your eyes,
Little ones, a paradise
Looms up, blossoms into sight,
Full of infinite delight!

And a longing at the core
Of my heart sighs: "Evermore!
Evermore, O heavens mild!
Let me be a little child!"

Then I would to Fairy-land
Hie me, run upon the sand
Of its shores in childish glee,
Happy—as only child can be!

Little children, full of fun
As of light the God-blest sun!
Tedious hours your mirth beguiles
What were life without your smiles?



NATHAN STRAUSS

In this blessed land of ours,
Where as nothing kings are counted,
Merit only wears a crown;
Where all men are born equal,
Equal stand 'fore God and men;
Lives a citizen most honored,
Blessed, revered, beloved by all!
He is not a man of learning,
Altogether too profound,
But a simple man, a lover
Of the "Little Innocents".
NATHAN STRAUSS, of him I sing:
He, the man who saves the babies
From disease, from early death,
Giving them with human kindness
Milk purified and fit to drink,
What reward shall he receive
In the day of great rewards?
Virtue's own Sweet recompense!

OLD TRINITY

I

Lo! Yonder stands on crowded stage
A lonely Church bedeckt with age!
Though many be that pass her place,
But few do stop for word of grace
Or blessing of Divinity
At Church of dear, old Trinity!

II

The noble race she loved and blest
Beneath her sod has gone to rest.
Now, all alone, she strives to sow
The Seed of Faith 'mong tares that grow
And choke the fair vicinity
Of the old Church of Trinity!

III

Her sweetly-ringing chimes I hear
But faintly, though with eager ear
I listen to their charming play!
For rumbling noises, all the day
And all the night impair and pall
Old Trinity's enchanting call!

OLD TRINITY

IV

Her steeple, once a lofty spire,
Reminding of things better, higher,
A dwarf it seems, now, small in size,
Compared with giant walls that rise
Above it in colossal height,
Obscuring dear, old Trinity's light!

* *
*

Her darkness deepens into night,
Old Trinity's nowhere in sight!
For cursed Mammon's avarice
Has claimed another sacrifice!
"Another New-York landmark gone,"
Historians quote, the world goes on!

THE WORLD, THE FLESH AND THE DEVIL

I

Through night's long and weary hours,
Vigil keeping 'gainst temptation,
Sits the lonely cloistered novice
In profoundest contemplation.

II

Round about him perfect stillness,
Not a stirring sound intrudes;
His imagination peoples
Emptiness with multitudes!

III

And he sees the busy world
With its noisy, merry-making
Crowds his solitude invading,
His lone cell in adverse-taking!

THE WORLD, THE FLESH AND THE DEVIL

IV

"Holy Mother," cries the recluse,
'Mid the battle's noise and din,
"Whither shall I flee for refuge
"From a world steeped in sin?"

V

"Nowhere, child," the Mother
Gently makes reply; "thy level
Best, thy utmost, in the world
Do, and thou shalt shame the devil!"

THE WAY OF THE PHILANTHROPIST IS HARD

(*Andrew Carnegie*)

I

When on his throne King David sat
In dear, old-dear Jerusalem,
And to him came as supplicant
A shivering, naked, shorn lamb,
Or widow crying for relief——
Then woe betide that sneaking thief!
For justice swift he would receive
And punishment without delay.
"'Tis philanthropy," the king would state,
"That hard be made transgressor's way!"

THE WAY OF THE PHILANTHROPIST IS HARD

II

But when in "New-Jerusalem"
Of millions two a man was robbbed,
And he, a worthy philanthrop,
Silence kept, while "Bankers" sobbed
And cried and stormed for lucre more,
Or else— there would be spilled some gore!
That man was called yet to explain
Afore the People's Sovereignty
How dared he "No" to say?—Said he:
"Too hard's the way of philanthropy!"

WOMAN

(Ancient)

There's a dear, angelic creature,
Lovely, and of comely feature;
Fascinating, sweet, delicious,
Yet withal—a thing capricious!
Feminine it is of gender,
And of heart most kind and tender;
More divine indeed than human,
Wooed by man, by him named Woman!

(Modern)

There's the woman-suffragette,
The one I love, my sweet Babette!
She's anxious to be "mannish,"
Yet "tight-lacing" she won't banish!
Prettily upon her tip-toes
Trips she, blushing like the primrose,
In a manner super-human,
How she does it—knows but woman!

WOMAN

(Of All Ages)

Many a thing there's yet to learn
By the male-brute to discern
In the eternal feminine !
Woman's the world's heroine,
The fragrance of its atmosphere!
If she err, man, drop a tear!
And press her closer to thy heart!
Woman's mankind's better part!

THERE'S A REASON

Because it is a fact,
Of which we all are aware,
That "hat-less" woman is
A thing of beauty rare;

Such as to tempt a Saint,
His worship to address
More to lady-fair,
Than to beauty-of-holiness;

Wherefore, Apostle Paul
On this one thing stood pat:
That lovely woman must
Wear in the Church a hat!

In order that she be
A screened divinity;
And eyes profane elsewhere
May seek an affinity!

THE PITILESS SEA—AND THE MERCIFUL EARTH

To quench the flame
Of burning shame,
That threatened to
Destroy, undo
Her honor—bare
Her soul's despair;
In ocean's wave
She sought her grave!

Thought she, from shame
She'd saved her name:
(Would not the deep
Her secret keep?)
O'er moaning breeze
The raging seas
In anger shout:
"Hence! Cast her out!"

To Mother-Earth,
Who gave her birth,
Behold! Her clay
Is brought to-day!
With loving arms
Maid's faded charms
Tenderly she folds,
And never scolds!

THE PASSING CLOUD

As to the shades recede
The shadows of the night,
Grey dawn the day begets,
And darkness turns to light!

His smiling beams the sun
In morning glory sheds;
The face of all the earth
With radiance o'erspreads!

And if with skies o'ercast
Sometimes the day appears;
All veiled in misty haze,
And wet, and raining tears—

Then comes the wind and claps
His healing wings aloud;
And lo! 'Tis fair again;
'Twas but a passing cloud!

STRIVING

On the surging high sea sailing,
See, the little craft, so frail!
Bidding wind and wave defiance,
Fearing neither storm nor gale!
Though the billows into mountains
Rise and bar the passage clear;
O'er their tops it glides securely
To the harbor's bosom near!

* *
*

On the surging seas of passion
Lo, the toiling Ship-of-life!
If she ever reach the haven
Will it be worth labor's strife?
Hark! The people's voices shouting:
"Glory to the daring man!"
Leave all doubts then, man, behind thee!
Venture! Life is but a span!

Published in the N.Y. Evening Journal, Aug. 13, 1910

THE SHIP-OF-LIFE

Upon the vast, great ocean
A tiny craft set sail;
Set wind, waves in commotion,
That little boat, so frail!

* *
*

Set sail—in lowly fashion
And Wisdom's hidden art——
On turbulent seas of passion
A ship—The human heart!

TO NIMRODS

He who hunting goes must learn,

Not only straight to shoot;

But also, to distinguish

Betwixt man and brute!

UNBIDDEN GUESTS

And now that one by one,
My comrades all are gone;
Since my last bugle's call
On lonely ears must fall;
As I in silence moan——
Behold, I'm not alone!

* *
*

For lo! Upon the stage
The ailments of old-age!
Rude guests they are; unbidden
The presence of bed-ridden
Invalids they invade;
Departing, when death's debt's paid!

NIL DESPARANDUM

It does not pay to worry,
To fret and to be sorry
The whole day long —
'Cause things go wrong!
It is the height of folly,
I say, not to be jolly
When all-too-loud
Shouts the merry crowd!

* *
*

It costs nothing to be happy,
I tell you, my good chappie,
You too, grief-laden,
Foolish maiden,
Why sighing all the while?
Be ready with your smile,
And the world, too,
Will laugh with you!

MY COUNTRY

(Tune: My Country 'Tis Of Thee.)

I

My Country! O that Thee,
Land of the brave, the free,
My own I call!
Land of a world new,
Fresh as the morning-dew,
Where hope's fair dreams come true,
Thou art my all!

II

I love Thy cities fair,
Set up high in the glare
Of wealth untold!
I love Thy industries,
Thy busy factories,
Thy cherished memories
More than Thy gold!

MY COUNTRY

III

Land of sweet unity,
Where opportunity
Find rich and poor!
Where equal rights attain
All who the peace maintain;
Safe in dear Freedom's reign,
Rest we secure!

IV

My Country! O that I
Beneath Thy happy sky
Live, labor, toil!
And, when I mount the crest
Of life's wave, let me rest
Mong Pilgrim-Fathers blest,
In Thy free soil!

IN EXITU ISRAEL DE RUSSIU

I

From Odessee,
In Czar's domain,
Where lay the slain
By Cossack's spear——
My kinsmen dear——
In pools of blood
That unto God
Ran "Vengeance!" crying;
From 'mong the dying,
Myself, half-dead,
I rose and fled
America, to Thee!

II

And as upon
The golden sand
Of Thy fair land
I set my feet;
As its sweet
And balmy air
I breathed—all care
I threw away!
For in that day
My heart was glad!
I felt, I had
My freedom won!

IN EXITU ISRAEL DE RUSSIU

III

Dear Liberty!
My promised land!
I lift my hand
To Thee and swear:
Henceforth to share
Thy destiny!
If in the main,
Though Jew, I gain
Love and esteem
As man! I deem
My lot the best
'Mong mankind blest!

THE NINTH OF AB

(Anniversary of the destruction of Jerusalem)

Again the old-time grief
And pain my heart o'ertake!
Again I seek relief
From galling, racking ache.
My heart, it grieves to see
Jerusalem not free!

The wrathful day has come,
The Ninth of Ab is here;
Its terrors strike me dumb!
I cannot speak; I hear
The stones cry out, relate:
"Jerusalem is desolate!"

Be hopeful though my soul!
Keep up the burning flame
Of cherished love. Console
Jerusalem! Her name
And fame yet shall be great;
Not yet; but none too late!

Published in Hebrew Standand, 1911

REMEMBER

God our head,
Remember our dead!
The dead who fell
In Israel,
Not alone in war,
Defending, dying for
Their country dear;
Also those who near
Their hearth were grabbed
By fiends and stabbed
To death, because—
O let me pause——
It is no news——
Because they were Jews!

Published in Hebrew Standard, 1911

ZION'S PLIGHT

I

When I think of Thee, O Zion!
Glory of the Holy Land!
Recollecting Thee as City
Chartered by Jehovah's Hand;
Thy gates of pearls, Thy walls of gold,
By sage and prophet long foretold!
I do wonder, I know not how
Camest Thou to fall so low?

II

When I think of Thee, O Zion!
Of Thy renown, of Thy great fame!
When the word my lips do whisper,
Mentioning Thy holy name!
Name pronounced by many a tongue
In reverence, in holy song!
Blessed Zion, recalling Thee,
Why in tears Thy face I see?

ZION'S PLIGHT

III

"What if strangers do me honor,"
Sadly Zion answers me,
"What if gentiles "Allelujah!"
"Amen!" shout with fervent glee;
What if all the nations hail
Me as queen of a Fairy-tale?.
If the children, I've begotten,
Me, their mother, have forgotten!"

IV

"Can a mother forget her own,
Her bosom child, her only one ?
Will other children satisfy
Her craving for the child that's gone?
Will ever multitudes replace
The image of the loved one's face?
Never, never shall Zion rest,
Until her own are in her nest!

THE WANDERING JEW

(Tune: Home, Sweet Home)

I

O Patriarch of ancient days,
Abraham of old!
O father of a people rich
In blessings manifold!
Formost that blest inheritance
Of the Holy Land!
Forever promised to be theirs,
Now, no more in their hand!

II

I pray Thee, Father, tell me where,
O where in God's whole earth?
This people, Thine, a home did find,
A hospitable hearth?
Knowst Thou the land, that happy land,
That ever-blessed clime,
Where Israel found a resting place
For any length of time?

III

As thus I mused, a thousand thoughts
Invaded my mind's train;
They tortured me with questions hard
Again, and o'er again!
When all at once before me stood
That venerable sage,
Whom I invoked, and to me said
The man bowed down with age:

IV

"I, too, have left a Father's house,
I, your Abraham!
Have left the scenes of childhood's dreams,
The fairest tents of Shem!
Have parted, at the bidding of
A divine command,
From my home, my country dear,
My own, dear-native land!"

V

"The land ye seek is still far-off,
The rest not yet in sight!
There's many a long, long road to tramp,
Weary a day and night!
Nevertheless with patience great
Go wander in God's name!
'Tis your lot, your destiny
To spread His faith and fame!

VI

And when ye shall have thus fulfilled,
This, your mission true;
When all the world afar and wide
Shall give all honor due
To God, the One and Only God,
Then your song shall be,
The dear-old song "At Home Again!"
Jerusalem the free!"

ABRAHAM AND ABRAHAM

(In commemoration of the Lincoln Penny)

In the dim and distant shadows
Of primeval centuries——
'Way back in the golden era,
Days of ancient memories——
Trod with certain steps a wand'rer——
Abraham we call by name——
To the far-off land of promise,
Even unto world wide fame!

* *
*

Abraham of recent memory,
Lincoln man of yesterday!
Simple woodsman, poor, untutored——
Angel, demi-god to-day!
Thee we worship as the Father
Of a new and free-born race;
On the millions of our pennies
Cherish we thy bronzed face!

(Another version of the last two lines)

On sweet Labor's hard-earned pennies
Benignly smiles thy bronzed face!

Published in the N. Y. Evening Journal, Apr. 21, 1911

THE POOR ALSO GIVE THANKS

Again we give Thee heartfelt thanks, Dear Lord!
Naught else in gratitude can we afford
To offer up to-day. We have not much
Of anything to make show of, excepting such
As fortitude, privation to endure!
We thank Thee Lord, for that we still are poor!

* *
*

If we were rich, perhaps, we ne'er had thought
Of giving thanks! Perchance we would have sought
The path of pleasure and the pace that kills.
But we are still alive, and gladness fills
Our hearts. In poverty we rest secure!
We thank Thee Lord, for that we still are poor!

Published in the New York Times, Thanksgiving-day, 1910.

THE CHRISTMAS TIP

"To give, or not to give,"
The question, as I live,
Is utterly absurd!
Indeed, who ever heard
A soul express a doubt
At Christmas time about
The blessedness of giving?
Whoever Cost-of-Living
Figures—dollars, dimes,
When ring the Christmas chimes?

* *
*

The question, if at all,
Is, how to make too small
A gift look big! Know then:
If with "Good will to men"
And peace the heart o'erflows,
The gift the bigger grows!
Now, why ask questions queer?
Fill up the cup's good cheer!
Unloose the tightened grip!
And grant the Christmas-Tip!

Published in the Call, 1910.

FAITH OF MY FATHERS

I

I too, a Jew, do count my beads;
I too, believe in a Trinity!
Hear my Faith's confession, 'tis:
"Repentance, Prayer, Charity!"

II

Repentance pure and simple, such
As bringeth forth the noble deed,
And not alone vainglorious words:
That's the Jewish Creed!

III

And as to fervent prayers
And chants of melody,
Do tell me who can rival
King David's Psalmody?

FAITH OF MY FATHERS

IV

"Above all Charity"
(That like a gentle river
Floweth from the heart)
Who more, than Jew, a Giver?

V

Wherefore, of Thee I boast,
Faith of my illustrious nation!
For thou containest all
Things needful to Salvation!

Published in Hebrew Standard, 1911

THE TONGUE

I

Said Rabbi Simon to his son:
"Naphtali, my lusty lad,
To market-place do quickly run
And buy the "best" that can be had
Of things to eat. I say, the "best",
Put thou thy intellect to test!"

II

"A hind let-loose" was Naphtali,
And quick to strike the bargain-best.
"Think ye, I bring a spicy tart,
Or sweet-meats for our worthy guest,"
The youth remarked, "if so, ye're wrong;
I've bought a well-preserved tongue!"

III

"The tongue has neither fat nor bone,
Is tender, sweet and toothsome;
'Tis the food that not alone
Humans eat, but also angels gladsome!*
"Well done!" the Rabbi said; "now go,
My son, and buy the "worst" you know!"

---

*According to the Talmud the three men whom Abraham entertained as guests at the plain of Mamre were Angels and the food he sat before them was Calf 's-tongue.)

THE TONGUE

IV

Again the lad went out and back
He came with his bargain-gruesome;
A goodly tongue he showed, just like
The one he bought as wholesome;
"How's that, my boy, his father said,
Can one thing be both good and bad?"

V

"Yes, Father," said young Naphtali:
"In Holy Writ, in Book of Scriptures,
Much wisdom and delight I've found
And many Proverb-pictures."
Thus saith the Word of inspired song:
"Both life and death is in the tongue."

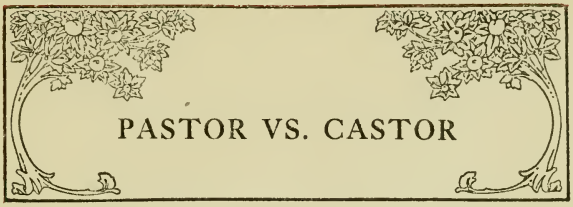
PASTOR VS. CASTOR

I

A sea-faring man, a sailor
And a sport was Dives Castor;
Owned a fashionable tailor
And of real cloth a Pastor;
Servants also, asses, monkeys,
Lions had he, men of grain;
A whole regiment of flunkies,
Marching, followed in his train!

II

And the rich ones, the four hundred,
Of whate'er variety,
The aristocrats, stiff-laundried
Bosoms of Society,
Swelled with pride as from afar,
From the distant far-away,
They beheld their guiding star——
Castor coming down the Bay!



III

With the news of a new conquest
Of a maiden sweet and fair;
Won of *Force* by him, the much-blest,
Richest, multi-millionaire;
(Who, though worshipper of money
And of frigid, cold-hard cash,)
Also loved much matrimony
With a fiery, youthful dash!

IV

Joyously the news the Smart-Set
Hailed, received with great delight!
How they doted on their dear pet,
The old-boy, the Errant-Knight!
How Society did flutter
O'er the nuptials' near event;
Exclamations loud did utter
For the ears of Castor meant!

PASTOR VS. CASTOR

V

What has happened to the Old-Boy?
What gloom shrouded the Elite?
Who so rudely spoiled their heart's Joy
Of anticipation sweet?
'Twas the preacher's saying: "Though King,
Lord he be of land and sea;
Never shall the Church's bells ring
When again weds Divorcee!"

(Subsequent events proved that the poet was mistaken.)

IF

If I only had a nickel
With my fortune of good health!
If, of all the much and mickle,
Of this world's piled up wealth,
Half-a-dime came to my share——
I should smile at dismal care!

If that precious coin came rolling
From the distant far away;
Hitting me, would I be howling
With delight or with dismay?——
Yes, I'd grab it with much pleasure,
Clinging to my nickel-treasure!

Would I keep it on caressing,
This my single Five-cent-piece?
Will it prove a curse or blessing,
Will it bring me war or peace?——
How should I know its true meaning?
Ne'er I see it, except when dreaming!

NOT YET

I

A little while—and the world in me
A celebrated bard shall see!
Not yet but soon great fame, renown
And garlands green my brow shall crown!

II

The editor, to whom I've sent
My poetry, his ear has lent
Unto my Muse's soulful song;
And, not to make my story long,

III

That noble man with black on white
Forthwith for me a check did write,
Which—God forbid!—That I should e'er
Exchange for dross or money— Ne'er!

NOT YET

IV

A golden frame I shall provide
For this, my treasure, to abide
With me, upon my garret's wall
From now, and to my last day's call!

V

As thus I mused in rapture bound,
Half dreaming, suddenly a sound
Of knocking broke upon my ear,
And I awoke and shook with fear!

VI

For there, before my very eyes,
My hope is broken, shattered, dies!
"Returned with thanks, the Editor,"
Is all I find, and nothing more!

A MORAL

(With apologies to Jack and Jill.)

I

Wake and Wack
At the bid and beck
Of a magician master
Went up a peg
And down a leg——
Straight into disaster.

II

Said Wake to Wack:
"I'm on the rack,
My blood's running faster;
Upon my soul!
I see a hole,
And there's our master!

A MORAL

III

Good master Hook
Alas, he took
Too much upon himself;
The cold north-pole
Red-hot he stole
Just for a little pelf!

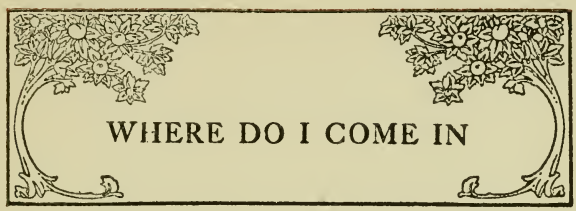
IV

If fortune forsake
Hook, Wack and Wake,
Who cares a briar?
But the world's a fool,
A credulous tool,
To any darned, old liar!

WHERE DO I COME IN

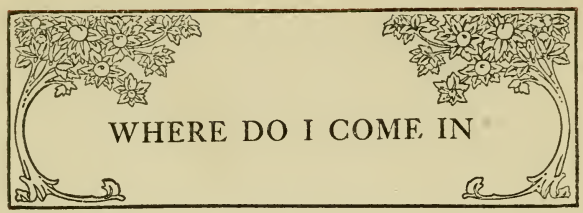
I

It was in fair September——
How well I do remember——
Anno Ninteen-hundred-nine:
Gloriously the sun did shine
With countenance of radiant rays
Upon the shortened summer-days.
The air was balmy, calm, serene——
When suddenly upon the scene
Of this great world a soul-
Stirring cry went up: "The Pole!
The pole! Earth's northmost nook
At last was found by Doctor Cook!"



II

But ere that cry was fully out,
Before the echo of that shout
Had ceased to go around——
Again the cry: "Nay, I have found
The pole! "was heard. 'Twas Peary,
Returning from the bleak and dreary
Regions of the Artic-sea,
Who publicly proclaimed that he,
Solely, had reached that goal;
None but he had found the pole!"
Now, " who is who?" to ask I'm weary,
The air is charged with Cook and Peary!



III

It was in fair September,
The thirteenth, I remember
Of the current year of grace.
The summer-girl from her place
Of many conquests came returning——
For that sweet sight my soul was yearning——
Impatiently I paced the station,
Oblivious of all creation,
Save for that of my only love;
At last I spied my cooing dove;
I flew at her, I called her "Dearie!"
But she was raving: Cook and Peary!

JOSEPH MARCUS

An honest man was Joseph
Marcus and a thrifty lad.
Saved the pennies till to dollars
They increased. Now his head
He holds erect, wields,
Commands much power, too.
Yet he is the same old Joseph:
Modest, and of heart most true!

* *
*

Saith he: "Saving" was my hobby,
Not a miser's craving—
Now I'll teach the poor the art,
The mystery of "saving."
No sooner said than done:
And for honest labor's rank
And file, yea for the workingman,
Opened he "The Public Bank."

(Composed on the occasion of the opening of The Public Bank on Delancey and Ludlow Streets, by Joseph Marcus, the popular "East-Side" Banker.)

LEX AND MEDICUS

I

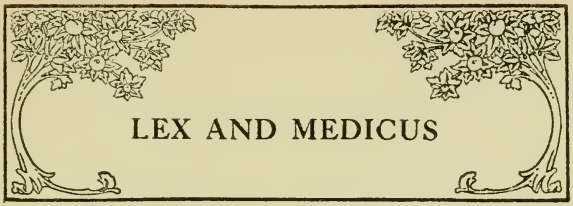
In school, at college, two lads fair
Of honors took an equal share;
In Latin, Greek, in Classics rare,
In games and sports of every kind.
They also did in high degree
In matters general agree,
Except that "Doctor" one to be
Desired, the other "Law" would grind.

II

And Medicus from school, pell mell,
Among cadavers went to dwell;
Whence he returned, the tale to tell
That he was made full-fledged an M. D.
Young Alex too, about that time
Did graduate. Of Laws sublime
He spoke, of Tort and Willful crime,
Quite authoritatively.

III

That their professions both well knew
Is an established fact; this too,
That litigants who came to sue
Consulted ne'er Lex-Counselor.
And the great army of mankind
Afflicted with disease: The blind,
The halt, the maimed, the poor-in-mind,
All passed by Young Medicus door!



IV

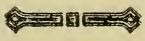
And summer-days have lingered on;
Long, weary hours have come and gone;
But never a client or patient upon
Friend Lex and Medicus did call.
And though the flowers had faded away;
And southward flew all summer-birds gay;
Their stout, young hearts never gave way
To gloomy spells, nor spleen or gall.

V

At last a case loomed up in sight
To the most infinite delight
Of Lex, sweet Advocate of right.
Forthwith he hastened to address
"His Honor", the judge, in open Court;
Yet, though he strove to hold the fort,
The landlord-plaintiff, on notice short,
The tenant-Lawyer did dispossess!

VI

In course of time, late in the fall,
A sound was heard in Medicus' hall,
Glad-tidings ringing of a "Call"
To the young doctor's eager ear.
"At last!" He sighed, "I do behold!"
That sight his blood did make run cold!
'Twas starving Lex—a beggar bold!
Now Medicus is acting queer!



THERE'S SOMTHING IN THE AIR

There's something in the air; a still, small voice
Foretelling who's the coming people's choice!
Bill Taft is getting thinner 'round the belt;
'Tis quite the other way with Teddy Roosevelt!

That Teddy to the "Third-Term" tune will dance
No sane man will deny. Give him a chance
Again, and he will smash the precedent
That wars against a "third-time" president!

The puny, pale-faced dolls are put away;
The Teddy-bears, instead, have come to stay!
The dove-of-peace has fled to Afric's velt,
And lo! The gleaming teeth of Teddy Roosevelt!

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